Gossip of Washington

Not Lese Majesty to Decline Informal Invitation to White House Dinners—The Big Market in Central and South America—To Maintain the Dignity of the United States Abroad—The Summer Somnolence of Washington.

WASHINGTON.—There were few presidents who cared less for conventionalities than does Mr. Roosevelt. Where these conventionalities mean national dignity or have any particular diplomatic significance Mr. Roosevelt wants to have them observed, but he is not a stickler for form and in his private life in the White House goes a good deal on the plan of a genuine old-fashioned American homebody. With some presidents an invitation to take dinner at the White House took the form of a command much as would a similar invitation from one of the crowned heads of Europe. Anyone receiving such an invitation would never have thought of declining it unless prevented by sickness or some providential interference.

Mr. Roosevelt's invitations to dinner have been sometimes declined, but only such as have been extended in a generous sort of "come and take pot luck with us" way. Not long ago one of his old ranch comrades from Montana called at the White House and the president asked him to take dinner with him that night. The old cattleman declined on the ground that he had no evening dress and in fact had never worn that sort of togs. Mr. Roosevelt pressed him, but he was firm in his resolve that he would not sit down among lot of other folks without being dressed as they were.

There have been others who have good-naturedly declined the president's informal invitations and their excuses have been just as good naturedly accepted. On one occasion Speaker Cannon had an engagement to dine at a cabinet dinner where the president was the guest of honor and he begged off in order to attend a gridiron dinner. The matter was compromised by a postponement of the cabinet dinner. It does not constitute lese majeste to decline an informal invitation to the White House dinners.

A PRECEDENT FOR THE GOOD OF THE COUNTRY.

Secretary of State Root is now on a mission that promises to be of great importance to the United States and to all the Republicans on the western hemisphere. It is a great departure from long established custom for a cabinet officer to visit neighboring countries and discuss with their administration international affairs, but the present administration at Washington cares very little about precedents so long as the thing contemplated to be done is for the good of the country.

Mr. Root is a man of practical ideas and since he became the premier of the administration he has been looking into the matter of extending United States trade to the countries to the south of us. He has been impressed with the idea that there is a big market in Central and South America that is in danger of being monopolized by foreign countries and which naturally ought to belong to the merchants and manufacturers of this country. One reason that the people of the United States are not getting their share of that market is a prejudice that exists among the Central and South American republics against this country.

Mr. Root has gone down on a visit to our sister republics for the purpose of persuading them that we are their best friends, and that they should look to the United States rather than to old European nations for commercial as well as political friendship. It will be Mr. Root's purpose also to inquire as to whether Germany and Great Britain are trying to make any headway in the politics of those countries as they are doing in their commerce. He hopes by personal contact with members of the administration to strengthen the old-fashioned American Monroe doctrine which denies the right of European governments to acquire any more territory on this hemisphere.

SUITABLE LEGATION AND EMBASSY BUILDINGS.

Now that the United States government has made a start in the direction of erecting suitable legation and embassy buildings for our representatives abroad it is hoped that before many years the United States flag will fly over property that this government owns in every prominent capital abroad. The fact that American ambassadors and ministers have had to rent their quarters abroad has been a disgrace to the United States diplomatic service.

The experience in Peking during the Boxer troubles in 1900 made it imperative that this government erect its own legation building in that city where a proper guard could be placed. A handsome ministerial residence and guardhouse have been provided there and now that the precedent is established, congress will be appealed to, as it was in this last session when an appropriation was made for the purchase of an ambassadorial residence in Constantinople. Minister John G. A. Leishman, who has been in Constantinople for a number of years, spent his leave of absence in Washington, and through Senator Knox, of Pennsylvania, and Secretary Root, had little difficulty in persuading congress that the diplomatic post at Constantinople should be made an embassy and that a suitable residence should be purchased for the ambassador.

THE PERSONNEL OF OUR CONSULAR SERVICE.

Those who have had occasion to observe the United States consular service in recent years have noted a distinct improvement in its personnel. Now that congress has passed a law reorganizing this service still greater things are expected of it. In the old days one of the standing jokes and constant sources of amusement when there was a change in the administration was afforded by the horde of politicians who came to Washington soliciting appointments to the United States consular service. It was almost the exception to find men urged for these places who were in any way fitted for them. The story is still told of a man during Cleveland's first administration who was an applicant for a consular post of great importance in Germany. When Cleveland asked him if he could speak German, he said: "No, but I have a brother who plays the German flute."

The consular posts were regarded as so many plums to be distributed among political workers who had aided in the election of a new administration. The places paid both salaries and fees and it was reckoned that a shrewd man would be able to make a pretty good thing out of the latter even if the salary was not very high. Then the service was also regarded as a convenient place to dump political workers of the "has been" type who would be stowed away in some far off corner of the world and forgotten. There have been cases where men were sent to consular posts and only heard of by an occasional report and left there for years and years until their very names almost were forgotten.

This order of things has been changed under the present administration of President Roosevelt and Secretary Root. Under the operation of the new law there will be constant changes and promotions on civil service principles and no consular officer is likely to be forgotten no matter how far he is away from Washington.

SUMMER IN THE NATIONAL CAPITAL.

In mid-summer the great national capital at Washington is like an overgrown country village. The quiet of its streets and its general somnolent character are remarked by visitors from all parts of the country. There is no rush, no crowd except at very brief periods during the day. From eight until nine o'clock in the morning the street cars are crowded and a good many people are seen on the sidewalks, but they compose the army of 25,000 government employes that is swallowed up behind the doors of the big marble and granite government buildings upon the stroke of nine.

Again from 4:30 until 5:30 there is another little bustle on the street as this ink-stained crowd of clerks come out of their office buildings and go home. That is about all the excitement there is during the daytime. There is a gentle little stir later in the evening as a few hundred of Washington's citizens go to the wharves and take the boat for an evening ride down the Potomac or board the trolley cars for a trip to the suburbs. After this crowd has gone Washington goes to sleep until about 11 o'clock when these evening pleasure seekers return home. By midnight, an hour when New York is just getting awake, Washington has its shutters closed and blinds drawn and anyone found on the street is looked on with suspicion by the police.

Styles for The Juveniles

The smart coat of the season is the red serge coat, trimmed with either brass or pearl buttons and with collar and cuffs of hunter's green. It makes a decidedly cheerful spot in the summer landscape.

Daintiness is ever attractive in the small girl's get-up, and the separate wash collar for the cheerful coat is a pretty touch; it may be of lace, or, better, of embroidered linen. Some prefer the heavy linen with buttonholed scallops; some mothers delight to linger over fine hand embroidery with insets of lace and lace frills.

Linen and cambric frocks made in simple style should be included in miss's wardrobe, for these frocks are both modish and practical. Even khaki, which is popular for the small boys, is used for girls' dresses, the kind made straight and very simple. For the heavier frocks a washable braid is the approved trimming.

A younger girl, perhaps 13 years old, wore on embroidered pink cambric. Her light yellow tresses done up on top of her head, it being such a warm evening, she presented a quaint grown-up appearance. Her bodice was cut V shape back and front, the pink embroidery edges showing prettily against fair neck and at dimpled elbow. She wore no "ornaments" whatever, not even the beads dear to the average girl's heart, and looked as fresh and simple as a peach.

The guimpe's the thing for the child's dress, the easily soiled portions can be removed and washed and while one set is in the tub another be worn. The rolling collar of the day is particularly becoming to our youthful friends and may be worn with a bow or tie. Some young ladies appreciate the value of the simple gold fastening pin; like many of us, extremely tired of the ornate and gladly going in for simplicity. A good, solid, gold safety pin of fair size is the sort to choose.

DAINTY DRESSES.

Much handwork is seen on girls' clothing nowadays, there being such a revival of embroidery and the finer kinds of needlework. Buttonholed scallops are pretty and not hard to do after one has got into the swing of the thing. Nothing better than the hand-made tub hats has been introduced in children's millinery for a long time, and the mob caps are universally becoming. They shade the face well, are easily kept clean.

The round Dutch neck and elbow sleeve is the order of the day for misses' summer dresses. Last evening we noticed a pretty girlish form robed in a white frock; a short untrimmed skirt, a full bodice with modestly high neck, the sleeves just to the elbow. The girdle was of flowered blue ribbon in palest tones, sleeve garters of the same; it was a charming costume for a girl of sweet sixteen on a summer evening—to be sure on the conventional order of sweet simplicity, but this conventional type is not to be scorned.

The child of to-day is a picturesque figure. Take the wee toddler in her straight frock and puffs for sleeves. Or her elder sister, attained to the dignity of belt and skirted dress and rolling collar and flopping hat. And the still older sister, with neat bodice and pleated skirt, square neck and short sleeves, hat trimmed with a pompon.

At least a line or two for the neglected boys. Let us speak of their negligee shirts, very like father's, with soft tucked bosom and tie matching the shirt material. The favorite materials are pongee, madras and wash silk. On very hot days the smaller boys may wear their sailor waists with dickey discarded, and thrust bare feet into cool sandals that are simply soles strapped on. There are wash hats for small lads too, and these are nice and cool; and caps of all sorts.

Fashions of Midsummer

The best dressed woman one sees now is the one that presents the coolest and freshest appearance rather than the one arrayed in gorgeousness and elaboration. And just now it seems there are a goodly number of well dressed women. Let us speak of a few costumes that lately came to our notice.

Here is a delectable one—a coat suit of butcher blue linen. The shirtwaist is of white Irish lawn, fine and exquisite; it is delicately hand embroidered, worn with a necktie of pale blue velvet tasselled with black and white silk. The Panama hat is encircled with a scarf of pale blue crepe de chine, fringed with black and white, and has a bunch of glowing red cherries to the front. The whole is cool and crisp and colorful.

AN EVENING DRESS.

Cambric is a favorite material, and as it launders so well has much to recommend it. The pink cambrics are very pretty—as seem all the pinks this year—and the hats of midsummer are most attractive with them. And while speaking of the charm of the summer frocks, let us not forget that petticoats, which, too, come in for display, are not to be neglected. One is very tired of cheap trimmings, therefore with the more zest calls attention to a petticoat of dotted muslin made up with a tucked ruffle and no lace; the ruffle attached by a wide beading through which is run a colored ribbon tying in bow and long loops.

A lovely gown of oyster-white muslin was made in picturesque style with a fichu crossed at the bosom. The high girdle was of pale blue liberty satin, the picture hat was adorned with white feathers. A more costly gown was of blush-rose India muslin made up over softest white silk. This also had a fichu draping the shoulders, the fichu and hem of the dress bordered with fine thread lace. The picture hat was wreathed in plumes of a rose shade somewhat deeper than the gown. Still another frock calls for description, a cobwebby muslin in a delicate peach color, with insertions and flounces of creamy old lace. Soft peach colored ribbons shone on sleeves and bodice, there was a high girdle of peach colored suede with dull silver art nouveau buttons adorning the same. The hat was of smoke-gray, with plume of the same color.

From the above it will be seen there is a liking for lovely soft combinations, but we must mention that there is also a liking for the use in millinery of big, brilliantly-colored cherries. This form of trimming is rather heavy and cumbersome, but gives a striking effect. The picture scarf is affected by tall "picture" women, and little shoulder capes are surely advancing in favor. Some women have taken to shawls, but these are very courageous.

ELLEN OSMONDE.

Strictly Ethical.

A capital story is being told of a K. C. now much in the public eye. He once took up a brief for nothing and won the case. The grateful client, however, sent a postal order for 15 shillings, which the K. C. accepted, through fear of giving offense by sending it back. At the bar mess one of the barristers jocularly accused him of unprofessional conduct in accepting less than gold. "Excuse me," replied the K. C., "but I took all the poor beggar had. I consider that is not unprofessional."—London Daily News.

"Feet" and "Trilbies."

A good story is told of little Princess Mary of Wales. It was said that one of her aunts, wishing to test her knowledge when she was beginning to talk fluently, pointed to her feet, and asked what she called them. "Ven I has shoes on vey is feet," was the answer. "Ven vey is bare vey is Trilbies."

No.

Millionaire—The dealer sold me this "old master" very cheap.

Friend—Because he knew you, I suppose?

Millionaire—Gad, no! Because he didn't.—Judge.

The Women Workers

HAVE SHOWN THEY ARE IN LABOR MARKET TO STAY.

The Many Lines Open to Wage-Earning Women—Her Peculiar Qualities Making for Success: Dexterity, Patience, Subtle Sympathy, Enthusiasm — Motherhood and Factory Life Should Be Divorced—Reasons Why She Is Paid Less Than Man.

BY MARGARET E. SANGSTER.

Women are to be taken into account as important factors in the labor markets of the world. Wherever there is an important commercial industry, let its nature be what it may, women are employed in its production, its buying and its selling. Women bind shoes, stitch gloves, make corsets, stand beside the loom day after day, in cotton mills, woolen mills, silk mills and paper mills; women make artificial flowers and feathers, paper boxes and safety pins. Women are employed in tobacco factories, candy factories, soap and perfume factories, and, in reality, very few things that we eat, drink or wear have not passed under the shaping hand or the finishing touch of a woman.

The labors of wage-earning women are confined to no locality. Thousands of women work in shops and factories in Bombay and Calcutta, just as they do in New England and the south and the middle west. Everywhere around the globe women work hard and long, support families and take their share in the world's work. Although there are labor unions of women, they appear to get on as a rule with fewer strikes and less friction than their brother-workmen.

In some localities at morning and evening, the streets are filled with long processions of women, young and old, going to and from their places of daily toil. In the great department stores saleswomen outnumber salesmen. They are equally as gifted in selling goods as their fellow clerks of the other sex. Notwithstanding the disabilities of the feminine organization, they lose little time and make no fuss about the hardships incidental to standing behind a counter.

Women set type, read proof, go about as reporters to gather news, and sell newspapers on the street. In a very few cases, women occupy important editorial positions, and in a great number of cases they fulfil every possible requirement as sub-editors or managers of fashion departments. Women are prison inspectors and matrons at police stations. The trained nurse is a familiar figure. An army of stenographers and typewriters finds its way into the great thoroughfares and brightens business offices by its cheerful presence every day. It may almost be said that woman's opportunity to earn money is limited only by her ambition, her skill, her industry and her needs.

* * * * *

Young girls, it would seem, might find an appropriate avenue for wage-earning in domestic service, but this field of labor is still left to our foreign population. At one time the Irish monopolized it, and they were followed by Germans, Danes, Norwegians and Swedes. At the moment the competition has veered from these toward the increasing number of colored women who accept the kitchen as their sphere, and the constantly augmented immigration from Russia and Poland. Women of Slavonic origin, for the most part ignorant and totally untrained, are becoming a recognizable feature in the labor market as it affects our homes.

It used to be said that women crowded men out of the ranks. This need not much be feared. There still remains plenty of work that women are not likely to undertake in very large numbers. The great railway system throughout the country employs men as engineers, firemen, brakemen, porters and conductors; the motormen on the electric cars and the more or less civil conductors and guards are men. Although house decoration enlists many women, particularly in lines where brains are required, yet the actual building, the work that taxes muscles and back, legs and arms, is done by men.

Occasionally a woman financier creates a ripple of astonishment by her audacity, pluck and success. But the great financiers of the modern world, the great railway kings, and the managers generally of big affairs, are men. Broadly speaking, women bring to the labor market patience, dexterity, quickness and perseverance; they have an eye for details, and they are learning how to obey orders. But they are rather privates in the ranks than leaders and commanders.

Naturally, the absorption of scores of women in fields of employment outside the home, tends in some places to lessen interest in home life. Singularly, however, in towns where women are largely employed in mills and factories, there is a large proportion of early marriages.

Not infrequently a girl who has had a very short childhood, stepping at the earliest moment allowable by law from the schoolroom to the shop or mill, marries in her early teens a young man with no prospects beyond his day's wages. Neither of the parties to this hasty marriage has saved a penny for the rainy day, and after the wedding both go on working as usual. By and by a baby arrives, usually drifting into the world to be cared for by a mother who has not the faintest notion of what maternity means, and who has no nourishment to give the little life. When the mother is able she goes back to the mill, leaving the infant to be cared for by a relative, a mother or an aunt who has grown too old to work. Children born of such marriages are seldom rosy and strong. The mortality among them is large, and they survive at all only by the law of the survival of the fittest. This is the gloomiest side of the picture, rivaled only by that which is the burning shame and disgrace of American life, the ineffaceable stigma brought upon us by the commercial greed in the toleration of child labor. Motherhood and factory life should be divorced.

* * * * *

Whether women work by the day or by the piece their earnings are very seldom on so large a scale as the earnings of men. Why this should be is accounted for by those who believe in the ballot for women on the theory that women cannot vote, and that although they preponderate in the labor market, they have no direct influence in politics.

Another explanation is that they are somewhat less thorough and responsible than men in carrying out what they undertake. This is a slur on the working woman which is undeserved and mean. It must be admitted, I regret to say, that women have less regard for the validity of a contract than men, and that they are much more likely to drop their work and change a situation on impulse than men are. Marriage, too, often takes them, as it should, out of the ranks of competition and places them in the shelter of home life.

This is evident in the higher departments, rather than in the lower. Saleswomen and teachers are less likely to desire continuance in their places as wage-earners than are the girls who paste labels, make boxes, stitch gloves and stand at looms. As we rise socially in the scale, have greater intelligence and more liberal education, marriage is on a higher plane and is founded on a basis of nobler qualities.

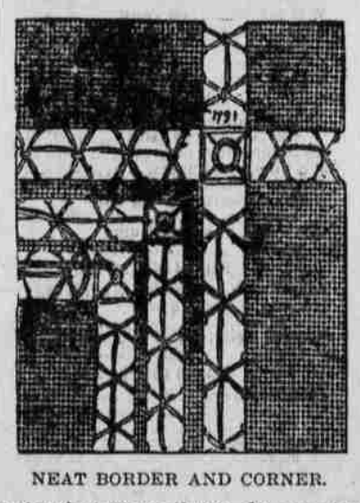
Women are in the labor market to stay. They cannot be eliminated. They belong to the van-guard of modern civilization than which nothing is so complex and nothing more interesting. They bring to their task the subtle sympathy, the quick perception and the enthusiasm that belong to their sex. They earn every dollar of their wages or their salaries.

In the finer grades of commerce, women do good service as buyers for importing houses and the departments of dressmaking, millinery, embroidery, home decoration and kindred lines are very largely in their hands. Mother Eve is the first seamstress on record; her daughters ever since have been busy in carrying out what she began, the making of clothing for the race.

Simple Drawn-Work.

The Mexican Drawn-Work Involves Close Use of the Eyes, But This Design Very Easy.

This is a design that can be used for canvas or linen. It is simple and effective. After the threads are drawn the strands that are left are drawn together in twos or threes close to edge of material, then two of the clusters are drawn together by a continuous thread in the center. For the small amount of work required, the effect is very good; and has this to recommend it—it is not so hard on the eyes as the close labor on intricate patterns.



NEAT BORDER AND CORNER.

The Traveler.

Medicine is always carried by the wise traveler, and small medicine cases are easily procured, and very inexpsneive. A few sewing materials—needle, thread, scissors—are good for an emergency and are wise additions to the suit case. Pocket flasks are recommended by experienced travelers, and clothes brush and fan will add to the comfort of the journey.